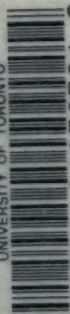


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Inness, W. A.
Rhymes of the R.N.C.V.R.

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RHYMES OF THE
R. N. C. V. R.
AND OTHER VERSES

By CAPT. W. A. INNESS.



"Rolling along with the wind abeam,
Blowing a thirty mile gale,
Water swashing about on the deck,
Tumbling in over the rail."

RHYMES OF THE R.N.C.V.R.
AND OTHER VERSES

BY CAPT. W. A. INNESS

1919
WEEKS PRINTING COMPANY, LTD., 52 Argyle St.,
Halifax, Nova Scotia



PS

8517

N524R5

TO MY SHIPMATES, THIS LITTLE VOLUME
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.




Copyright, Canada, 1919
by
W. A. INNESS

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PRELUDE.

I've spliced together words I knew,
In sail, in steam, at sea;
I've steered the rhythm as I could,
A crooked course, may-be;
I've moored the titles to each piece,
Some true, and some are lies:
If aught is malice, then, Shipmates,
I humbly 'pologize.



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THE CALL OF THE SEA.

'Tis the Call of the Sea that mariners hear,
While sojourning on land with little to fear;
That restless feeling—that longing to flee
From civilization—the Call of the Sea.

His thoughts are on shipboard—perhaps it's a gale,
Whether hove to or running, ship's under short
sail;
With waves high as mountains, and just on the lee
Are rocks and destruction—the Call of the Sea.

Or perhaps he is thinking of nights in the trades,
When the moon's mellow light o'er the water
casts shades
Of the sails, as they swell with the breeze, or maybe
Sees the wake, phosphorescent,—the Call of
the Sea.

So it matters but little if stormy or fine,
His thoughts 'bout the ocean will always
entwine;
In his mouth the salt taste of the spray will e'er be,
And on land he is hearing the Call of the Sea.

THE BATTLE OF INGONISH.

Since Nelson's time the British fleet unchallenged
 sailed the seas,
'Til Kaizer Bill proclaimed from Kiel, "Now
 Britons, on your knees!
I'm coming out to fight you now, by fair means or
 by foul!
My dreadnaughts, cruisers, U boats, mines, will
 make the bull dog howl!"
 He little knew where it would end,
 That Canada her fleet would send,
 Cape Breton's coast line to defend,
 Off Ingonish!

The day and year I must not tell—the censor would
 object,
Nor must I call the ships by name, although I am
 correct—
With senior officer in charge, formed single line
 ahead,
And each in turn confirmed the hoist, "Ten knots,
 north-east," it read.
 They did not know just what it meant,
 From Chief to Stoker, all intent,
 And racing seemed the great event,
 To Ingonish.

THE BATTLE OF INGONISH.

"E Pennant Five," then fluttered forth, from each
yard-arm in turn,

Two went to starboard, three to port, the rest went
full astern.

The captain paced the quarter deck and cursed all
those that err,

"Send out a general signal now, you blighters, "As
you were,"

So each got back again in line,

But number five was number nine,

He looked ashore and said, "That's fine!
Here's Ingonish!"

"Clear now for action, one and all! A German
sub's in sight!

Range five, O-Double-O, red one-ten, deflection eight
to right!

Now up, now down," the orders were, amid the can-
non's roar!

The battle raged its wildest from half past three to
four.

"Eight bells have gone, head out to sea,

The battle's won, we'll now have tea,

And Sydney's shores we soon will see,

Vale! Ingonish!"

PATRIOTS.

I met a genial captain,
As I came along the street,
In a brand new uniform
With cane and gloves complete.
Says I, "How are you, Captain?"
And I made to him a bow,
Says he, "Confound it, man, salute!
I'm in the Navy now!"

I strolled into the Acadian House,
To start a bit of fun,
Says I, "Good-evening gentlemen!
Is it here you sink the Hun?"
Their voices rose indignantly,
A frown on every brow
Quoth they, "We're patriots, one and all!
We're in the Navy now!"

On board the good ship "Niobe"
I truthfully confess,
Are growning signs of discontent
Among the 'tween deck mess;
The tea is cold, the fish is scarce,
Tough beef, I must allow,
But carry on and do your bit,
You're in the Navy now!

A NIOBE SAILOR'S YARN.

“They calls her now the depot ship,
And bally well she’s named—
She’s moored so tight to the bloomin’ slip,
I know she feels ashamed!
She that’s covered with armor plate,
That used to carry guns,
While sister ships below her rate
Are shootin’ at the Huns!
And when a convoy passes by,
They always dip their flag;
They does it out of sympathy—
They do not mean to brag,
'Cause they all know the circumstance,
Just why she is not free
To move about, and has no chance
Of gettin’ out to Sea.

“Behind it all is Politics—
At least, it’s noised about
That Cab’net men, with shady tricks
All her defects brought out.
And then some says—it may be true,
How them that’s running things
Are making money for the few
That’s inside of the rings.

A NIOBE SAILOR'S YARN.

Of course, I nothin' knows myself,
 Bein' only an A. B.,
Except that not a bit of pelf,
 Is ever handed me.
I guess the Officers in charge,
 Are all well satisfied
To have her lookin' like a barge,
 And to the quay well tied.

“Have Navy rules? Well I should toot!
 The Grand fleet don't have more—
Exceptin' that we don't salute
 A two ring man on shore.
The toddy's done now—that's the worst—
 The bloomin' ship's gone dry!
I'm sure the old craft dies o' thirst—
 And Matie, so does I.
We're better paid, get more to eat,
 A larger outfit here,
But what's the use o' havin' food,
 Without a mug o' beer.
Why, sure, they puts you in the Clink,
 If they takes it in their head,
You're on the quarter quick as wink,
 To hear the warrant read.

“How many men? that I can't say!
 You see, they come and go—
Drafts a movin' all the time,
 Like a bally picture show.
Fifty in from Esquimalt,
 Waitin' for transport,

A NIOBE SAILOR'S YARN.

And every gink a findin' fault,
Cause his leave is gettin' short.
Bermuda's sendin' ninety-eight,
And there's the Hong-Kong bunch—
There's always somethin' doin' Mate,
'Tween breakfast time and lunch.
It's "Workin' party, quick fall in!
This luggage to the train!"
And when you gets there, sure as sin,
There's a load right back again.

"Say, don't salute! Why, that's a joke!
No, man, he's not a Sub—
He's only a Canadian bloke,
He's Skipper on yon tub!
There's dozens of 'em when at drill,
The lame, the halt, the blind,
You ought to see them climb the hill—
The old chaps lag behind—
Yes, Mate, ten-thirty boat's right here,
Say, have another fag!
And when we meets where they sell beer,
We'll get a fightin' jag.
Well so long, and safe passage home,
Good-night—say take a tip—
Look out sharp in the danger zone—
See you again next trip!"

FLOTSAM.

This poor attempt at poetry, I make to pass the
time,
'Tis of the folks one meets now days, from every
earthly clime;
The square head sailor, always drunk, the negro
with thick lips,
And stokers black, with soot and dirt, they're found
about on ships;
The Turk, the Slav, the Polack too, Dagos with
their black hand,
Chinese and Jap, Gentile and Jew, adriftin' 'round
the land.

I've sailed the sea,
I've lived on shore
And mixed with those that roam,
Ashore, afloat,
What gets my goat
Is the chap from over 'ome.

He's always right, he's never wrong, he knows it
all and more,
And if by chance you should oppose his view, why
then he's sore.

FLOTSAM.

For drinking tea, he'll take the prize, no difference
where he is,

And taking baths—My Word! but then, he surely
shines at this.

The Irish, the French, Scottie or Greek, with them
you will admit,

Sober or full, young Johnny Bull really thinks he's
It.

I've sailed the sea,

I've lived on shore

And mixed with those that roam,

Ashore, afloat,

What gets my goat

Is the chap from over 'ome.

BRONCHOS.

We come from the West, where the grain grows
best,

Where the coyote howls by night,
Scared if we stayed that we would be made
To go to the Front and fight.
So how to find some place for a blind,
It puzzled both Pa and Ma,
Until some one said, "Why haven't you read
Of the R. N. C. V. R.?"

So, without a slip, to the depot ship,
We travelled day and night,
And it was grand on the deck to stand
And be taught just how to fight!
To knot and splice, was not so nice,
For Oh! that smell of tar!
It made us sick, but still we stick
To the R. N. C. V. R.

Out on the deep we learn to sweep
For mines that lie below,
How they find the way, on such a day,
In the fog, we do not know!
We do not fail to seek the rail
And look for depths afar—
There are times you'd hate to be a Mate
In the R. N. C. V. R.

BRONCHOS.

Of course each Mate must navigate,
Must box the compass, too!
Rules of the road, the flags in code,
To know just what to do
When he gets afloat on his own boat
And passes o'er the bar—
It's an awful strain on a youthful brain
In the R. N. C. V. R.

When on the street we chance to meet,
A skipper passing by,
We don't salute the old galoot,
But hold our heads up high!
The "Tally Ho" is the place we go
By taxi or by car,
Come, drink with me a pot of tea
To the R. N. C. V. R.

PATROLLING.

*On outside patrol, we pitch and we roll,
Really rough weather for June,
We wonder what scare is now in the air
As the wireless buzzes a tune.*

Says Horton to me, "Now Captain," says he,
"What are you planning to do
Should the message be from the N. I. D.
To proceed to the rendezvous?"
"To Dartmouth we'll steam, get Mount Hope abeam,
Call through the big megaphone,
Asylum ahoy! man, woman or boy,
Have you a pilot to loan?"

We're off on a trip to convoy a ship,
A phantom without any name,
Atmosphere's hazy, send some-one crazy,
Who will be used to the game."
Then jingle away, ten knots down the Bay,
Every man Jack at his post,
Signals all flying, each blighter trying
To get first glimpse of the ghost.

PATROLLING.

The next hoist to make is, "Phantom, you take
Position two cables behind,
And follow on slow, wherever we go,
Until the channel we find."
To Camperdown then we signal again,
With flag, with arc or by wire,
The ghost is O. K., his answer is "Yea,
Enter, the forts will not fire."

*On outside patrol, we pitch and we roll,
Really rough weather for June,
We wonder what scare is now in the air
As the wireless buzzes a tune.*

C. D.

I saw a little wood ship,
Go chugging out to sea;
 It did not brag
 Of any flag,
But it was marked "C. D."
And half aboard the good ship,
Had never been to sea.

So if the Allied warships,
Who question every breath,
 Should ask of me,
 "What means C. D.?"
In the words of old Macbeth,
I'd say to them, "Your Lordships,
It's *Courage* and it's *Death*."

They go to cross the Ocean,
The North Sea to patrol,
 If they outlast
 The winter's blast,
And brave Atlantic's roll,
The Hun will take a notion
And hide to save his soul.

And so, without a murmur,
The dreaded task they brave,
 Of crossing o'er
 From shore to shore,
And risk a watery grave,
To help those on terra firma,
Their country's flag to save.

SWANKERS.

Tho' Destiny holds in her war-mangled hands,
Adventure and incident for us to meet
We'll never forget, tho' we may not regret,
The cane swinging Skippers on Barrington
Street.

The gong of the trolleys, the auto's Honk! Honk!
The girls that we see with ankles so neat,
May pass from us all, but we'll ever recall
The cane swinging Skippers on Barrington
Street.

The idiom naval, that confusing speech,
We learn ere our gunnery instruction's complete,
We'll lose it—we ought—tho' we'll ne'er lose the
thought
Of the cane swinging Skippers on Barrington
Street.

The pleasures and pains of present and past,
Our Acadian Barracks so tidy and neat,
Tho' all fade away, thru the memory will stray
The cane swinging Skippers on Barrington
Street.

Most all of 'em "has beens," what pleasure they
take
Telling of frolics and things indiscreet,
Every day just the same, war is only a game
To the cane swinging Skippers on Barrington
Street.

THE KNOCKER.

“Did you ever meet a guy when you was feelin’ kind
o’ gay,
And you’d something in your noddle that was really
nice to say,
But before you had a chance to form a sentence in
your mind,
The gloom would over-take you—seem to come up
from behind;
Then you’d try to overcome it and begin your little
tale,
But before you’d gotten half way thru, your hearer,
without fail
Would dampen all your ardor with the melancholy
rife,
That seems to emanate from those who take the joy
from life.

“It may be you’d be tellin’ ’bout the kiddies left at
home—
How your thots was always of ’em as ’round the
world you roam,
And when the voyage was over and you’re safe at
home once more,—
You’d fairly draw a picture of ’em ’round the
cottage door.

THE KNOCKER.

But the gink that you was tellin' 'stead of seein'
same as you,
Would start off on a tangent 'scribin' what they all
might do:
They'd grow up to disgrace you—words that cut
just like a knife,
And would leave you blue, discouraged, with the joy
all gone from life.

“Or maybe you'd been helpin' some unfortunates
that fell,
To get back again in favor, their secret guardin'
well—
And you felt you was succeedin'—in fact, the goal's
in sight,
When all your care and effort was blasted over
night.
Someone eame who knew the story, and they didn't
fail to tell,
Addin' some more to it maybe—so long's it sounded
well;
Ostracized—again they've fallen, like the vanguish-
ed in the strife,
With the public's condemnation—all the joy gone
out of life.”

So, if you take a knocker's view, remember in your
Class,
Are those that dwell sometimes like you, in houses
built of glass—
An unkind word, tho' idly said, which probably is
true,

THE KNOCKER.

Like chickens coming home to roost, may yet
rebound on you.

It's better far to try and boost, to see things that
are bright,

To try and cover up the wrongs and only see the
right—

To lead in the procession, keeping time with drum
and fife,

Then, instead of taking out of, you'll put real joy in
life.

IN HARBOR.

“The same old stunt in the morning, Mates,
 Scrubbing decks, washing her clean,
Shining the brass on the bridge deck, too,
 Don’t let a speck be seen—
Pulling the Old Man ashore at nine,
 With the same old stroke and roll—
Say, what will we do if the orders come through,
 To send us out on Patrol!

“We’re done with mucking down the bilge,
 Finished with grease and waste;
Boiler is leaking—while in for repairs,
 A bit of shore life to taste.
Out for an auto ride—skirt with you too—
 Dinner, then go for a stroll;
The sweet little dear will lisp in your ear,
 “*When* do you go on patrol?”

“Sparks’ vision of comfort—no turning out now,
 No watch coming on at two;
Picking away on the old mandolin,
 Sleeping the whole night through;
Tennis and tea with the best of the land,
 Each maiden he tries to cajole,
The stout and the slim, they all say to him,
 “*When* do you go on patrol?”

IN HARBOR.

“Sailors and stokers, go clean yourself up,
Dig some new clothes from your kit;
Dine at a restaurant, eat some real food,
Flirt with the Waitress a bit;
Candy and icecream, a picture show, too,
But mind now! don't tell a soul,
What number C. D., T. R. or P. V.,
Or when we go out on patrol.

“For some of them anchor in Cripple Cove,
And some are tied to the Piers;
Some of them swing to their mooring chains,
Some, waiting for engineers;
Some crews are ashore to gunnery drill,
Some down to the barge for coal,
With a single thought among the whole lot,
When do we go on patrol!”

THE SENIOR OFFICER.

“My first transmigration,” old mariner said,

“Was millions of years ago;

I can’t on my honor remember just how,

But the upward trend was slow.

For hundreds of years I served with the ants,

I came to them from the Sea—

My spirit longed for a greater expanse;

I next lived the life of a bee.

“It seems like a dream, a cloud or a blur—

But still the impressions exist,

That I see the same things in different shape,

As phantoms are seen through the mist.

I distinctly recall when ferocious and wild,

The beasts of the jungle my prey,

When I ruled by means of my strength, my might,

And longed for the battle, the fray.

“The centuries pass—I am weak once again—

Tho’ back on the main stem of life;

From creeping and crawling to climbing—but still

There’s self preservation, there’s strife.

The gradual rising, the standing erect—

Two feet on the ground—then I ran,

Waving my arms and shouting for joy;

Discovered—I reason—I’m man!

THE SENIOR OFFICER.

“I can’t recollect when first going to sea,
The name or what kind of ship,
But burned in my mem’ry time cannot efface
This one old historical trip:
The Centurian Julius, soldiers and men,
The vessel, the prisoners and all—
Doomed to destruction by force of the gale,
Then saved by the prayer of St. Paul.

“I sailed with Columbus, trip after trip,
Returning our trophys to Spain;
With buccaneer Morgan and old Captain Kidd,
I helped loot the Indies and Main.
The boom of the cannon’s the next that I know,
At Trafalgar and at the Nile,
I’m gunner with Nelson, the fighter of old,
Whose signal still floats o’er the Isle.

“It was I on that voyage when rounding the Horn,
Am wholly to blame for the loss
And the curse that came to the good sailing ship,
It was I killed the albatross.
There’s sadness in all spheres, but never was woe
As beheld on that good ship’s deck;
Wandering aimlessly there with the dead,
The skeleton bird at my neck.

THE SENIOR OFFICER

“And now, after years and years on the shelf,
I’m old, decrepit and gray;
I suddenly get in the lime light again,
Doing my bit, so they say.
Training Canadians—Naval routine—
Sending them after the Hun;
Getting promotion for all with blue blood,
While waiting the sentence, “Well done!”

“My first transmigration,” the ancient one said,
“Was millions of years ago;
I can’t on my honor remember just how,
But the upward trend was slow.
Still now, when I’m standing right on the top rung,
And nations my praises all sing,
My spirit, still longing for greater expanse,
Goes flitting away on the wing.”

C. D'S OVERSEAS.

10 C. D. Skippers before Hose in line,
O'Hara says, "No Sir!" Then there were nine.

9 C. D. Skippers, classed as first rate,
Hayward says "Not me, Sir!" Then there were
eight.

8 C. D. Skippers, all bound for Heaven,
Lintlop says, "Not so soon!" Then there were
seven.

7 C. D. Skippers in the same fix,
Motley wired Ottawa! Then there were six.

6 C. D. Skippers, very much alive,
Davison says, "I'll stay so" Then there were five.

5 C. D. Skippers all feeling sore,
Langlois simply wouldn't go. Then there were
four

4 C. D. Skippers headed out to Sea,
Balcom says, "No farther!" Then there were
three.

3 C. D. Skippers knowing what to do,
Balais says, "I'm with you!" Then there were two.

2 C. D. Skippers,—all the others gone,
Martin says, "Never!" Then there was one.

1 C. D. Skipper standing there alone,
Hose says, "You're fired!" Then there was none.

A CHRISTMAS TOAST.

A toast to all ships on the Ocean,
Be they Naval or Merchant Marine!
A good bumper too, for each of the crew,
Where the flag of the Allies is seen!

So here's to the big ones of Britain!
And a health to the smaller craft, too!
On deck or below, where-ever they go,
You will find every one staunch and true!

So here's to our own ship so gallant!
And as on the billows we roll,
In safety may she steam over the sea,
The Best of the Naval Patrol!

And while each health we are drinking,
Let us add some Christmas cheer!
Canadians true, both Captain and crew,
We wish you a happy New Year!

BASE EFFICIENCY.

When away from home, one is lonely
No matter where he may roam—
A letter's a treat, like an old friend to meet,
So don't neglect writing from home.
If you are a wife or a sweetheart,
Or mother with son on the roll,
The address will be T. R. or C. D.
At the base of the East Coast Patrol.

Of course, he won't get the letter,
Unless he should happen to be
Right there on the spot, and search thru the lot,
That's picked out for some other P. V.
The mail is just in from the office,
On the floor in a pile lies the swag—
At first there's a hush, then comes the mad rush,
As they scramble to get in the bag.

There are Mates and Skippers ahunting,
There are P. O's. and Stewards galore,
All hands lifting, and constantly shifting
The rubbish that litters the floor.
There are letters and papers together,
A month old, and some may be more;
There are pieces of rag, a hammock, a bag,
With a heaving line right by the door.

BASE EFFICIENCY.

There's a box 'way off in one corner,
The dust-pan seems travelling 'round,
No part of the room shows signs of a broom,
The floor may be wood or be ground.
So, if you are stationed down yonder,
At eleven or five, take a stroll,
Just pause at the rail and fight for your mail
At the base of the East Coast Patrol.

THE SKIPPER'S LAMENT.

I have sailed every ocean, as Master
 For thirty odd years more or less—
My experiences having been varied
 Is a truth to which I confess.
At times I have had full and plenty,
 At others, a mighty hard rub—
But I always managed to stick it,
 And never went back on the grub.

I have been on long trips, had the scurvy,
 Have done without water for days—
I have known what it is to be hungry,
 Beneath the sun's tropical rays—
I don't want you to think that I'm squealing,
 Or that I am getting cold feet,
But after three years in this Navy,
 I *do* long for something to eat.

I am tired of sardines and canned salmon,
 How I long for some fresh fish again!
The haddies that's rotten, and kippers,
 They certainly give me a pain!
I am tired of old sour sausage,
 And I pine for a good juicy steak—
For some bread, some buns and some biscuit,
 That no one but Mother can make.

THE SKIPPER'S LAMENT.

I long for roast turkey, for chicken;
I've forgotten the taste now of ham!
The beef that we get is the toughest—
I want to dine once more on lamb.
Take away all that green stuff—egg powder—
And banish stewed prunes from my sight;
Boiled rice or in puddings? No, never!
So long as I've strength left to fight.

I want to go elsewhere to supper,
The nights we have pickles and cheese,
The table has such an appearance
It makes me feel weak in the knees.
I long to smell doughnuts afrying,
To feast on a whole loaf of cake;
I'd like to be home in the kitchen,
To sample the pies as they bake.

But listen! Come close, till I whisper!
I'm watching and waiting, each day,
For the chap that invented the menu—
He's a real Navy man, so they say.
I'll invite him to come and have something;
He will fall for a good cup of tea,—
I'll see that the blighter gets poisoned!
Just watch in the papers and see.

DRIFTERS.

When I was only just a kid, my mother used to say,
 "I know my little sonny boy will make his
 mark some day!"

She's gone, dear soul, and I am glad she did not live
 to see

Her boy a drifting 'round the world, command-
 ing a C. D.

*There are six of us cooped in this cabin,
 With barely enough room for three,
There are five of them snoring this minute,
 A fine chance of sleeping for me!*

The greatest war of history is being fought just
 now,

Canadians on the firing line, to them all nations
 bow;

But sailors from the seven seas, of the same kith and
 kin,

Must stand aside while Lime juicers the best of
 jobs fill in.

*The oil lamp has burned out and I'm dozing,
 The cook's come aboard beastly drunk
And plants both big feet on my stomach,
 When crawling up into his bunk.*

DRIFTERS.

There are actors and bar tenders way up in high
command,

With some tinkers and some tailors in charge,
so understand

The feelings of a real Canuck is one of smouldering
rage,

When appointed to a Drifter modelled from the
Stone age.

It is raining on deck, well, I know it!

The water leaks down in my bed,

So I sleep in my boots and my oil skins

With a raincoat over my head.

SONG OF A COLD.

With face drawn into a grin,
 With lungs well filled with air,
His head erect and eyes shut tight,
 Sat a boy with tousled hair,
 Sneeze, sneeze, sneeze,
 Cough, splutter and scold,
His choking voice with anger rang,
 'Mid grunts and groans he hoarsely sang
The song of a miserable cold.

 Sneeze, sneeze, sneeze,
 Till tear-drops fall from the eyes,
 Sneeze, sneeze, sneeze,
One after the other they rise;
 Ears that rattle and snap,
Throat that is swollen and red,
 Bronchial tubes all filled with wheeze,
That nothing can start excepting a sneeze,
 That nearly splits open his head.

It is then that mother and aunts,
 Sisters and father and friends
All seem so sure their's is the cure,
 This vision the sick one portends,
 Sweat, sweat, sweat,
 Drops from his system ooze,

SONG OF A COLD.

Paining and aching in body and bone,
If only—if only they'd leave him alone,
That he might quietly snooze.

Cough, cough, cough,
All thru the tedious day,
Cough, cough, cough,
The weary night away;
At last with energy gone,
Feeling a hundred years old,
Dismally over the air will ring,
A spectral voice that continues to sing
This song of a miserable cold.

SAFETY FIRST.

When war was declared, in August, fourteen,
The clarion call to arms
Was answered by thousands of stalwart youths,
From cities, from towns, from farms.
This old Dominion from East to West,
From to the Line to the frozen North,
Was thrilled with a pride that no man denied,
As our soldier boys marched forth.
Some of us clung to the home fires bright,
Our reasons oft times rehearsed;
But when we must go, the Navy, you know,
Appealed to us———Safety First.

Out with the convoy, five hundred miles,
Along with Division Ten;
Leaving them safe at their rendezvous,
Back to the Base once again.
The leader's report to Headquarters staff,
Reads like a fairy romance;
But take it from me, we're done with the sea,
We're volunteers now for France.
We want to be sent right in the front line,
To shoot—for blood we all thirst;
There's none of us crave this life on the wave;
We're finished with———Safety First.

SAFETY FIRST.

Out on a fish smelling Trawler boat,
With a Nova Scotia Mate,
A Skipper that takes his grouch along,
And hums his Hymn of Hate.
Rolling along with the wind abeam,
Blowing a thirty mile gale,
Water swashing about on the deck,
Tumbling in over the rail;
Wet to the skin, sea-sick and afraid,
We're hustled around and cursed;
Come here! and Go there! but hardest to bear
Is calling us————Safety First.

The stoker that hoisted the ashes out,
Lay on the grating quite pale;
Across from him is an E. R. A.,
With his head out over the rail;
Abaft the skylight Buntie is curled,
Bracing himself by a stay;
On top of the trunk, the rest of them bunk
Drenched by the wash and the spray;
Steam down to eighty, off of her course,
But really, that's not the worst,
The Old Man looks down—he hopes that we drown—
Damns all the————Safety First.

In the years to come, when peace again reigns,
And nations forget their hate,
On each anniversary of the event,
Brave deeds we all will relate;

SAFETY FIRST.

As in the procession we swing along,
To the tune of the Maple Leaf,
There'll be many a tear for those not there,
Tho' time will have healed our grief;
'Twill be grand, at the festive board to hear
Grandpa in eloquence burst,
Of how it was he, saved the cause at sea,
Along with the———Safety First.

PROPHECY.

The Devil was sitting, dejected and sad,
 'Way off in one corner alone;
In fact, it had been quite a number of days,
 Since he even had looked at the throne.
His Imps were all worried, yet none dared to speak
 For the fear of arousing his ire;
So, in silence they watched him twiddle his thumbs,
 And gaze absently into the fire.

Every once in a while he would move his big hoof,
 Or perhaps he'd just wiggle an ear;
There wasn't a tremor that passed thru his frame,
 But what some of those Imps there would hear.
At last he arose, and called out to the Chief,
 "Go, tell every old sinner in Hell,
To be in the Throne room in ten minutes time—
 I have something important to tell."

Then donning his robes, and an asbestos crown,
 He marched o'er the blazing hot floor—
And seating himself, 'midst the stately array,
 Gave the order to open the door.
The first to approach was the spirit of Cain—
 He was all shrivelled up with the heat—
But nodding to Satan, says, "How do you do?"
 As he sidled across to his seat.

PROPHECY.

Next followed the sinners of Patriarch days,
Who, for six hundred years so uncouth
Had lived with their parents and still wore short
pants,

Who had died, as it were, in their youth.
Then the Devil sings out, "Who's blocking that
door?"

So the Imps shove Goliah along,
To a seat 'way up in the very front row,
Right ahead of the rest of the throng.

As, on thru the ages, each came to their turn,
So they followed each other on in—
Every one was apportioned a place to sit down,
Where the temperature equalled their sin.
Then Satan addressed them, from greatest to
least—

"I'll admit, I've been worried of late,
To know what to do, there's a crowd on the way—
The fact is, they're now at the gate.

"You see, when I planned out this bottomless pit
I was only a youngster in teens—
There was nothing invented up to that time
Such as zeppelins or large submarines.
There were wars, to be sure, but in those old days,
When the morals of people were low,
They hadn't learned then to spell Kultur with K,—
That remained for God's chosen, you know.

PROPHECY.

“Now these are the facts, as I state them to you—”

He was interrupted then by the bell,
The Gatekeeper announced, “An army’s outside,
That are branded, ‘Forever in Hell—’ ”

“Just a minute, there, please, what I wanted to say,
Was that some must surrender their seat,
As a lot of these new ones about to arrive,
Must get plenty of brimstone and heat.

“A plan’s underway for enlarging one wing,
To make room for the terrible Turk,—
The Austrians and Bulgars can go down below,
They’re reported good fellows to work.
The Germans must sit here, to sizzle and burn,
With a whiff of gas once in a while—
The Kaiser can tell them short stories of war,
And of nations he tried to beguile.

Now open the flood gates and let them all in,
Bring the Kaiser and Hindie this way;
Here’s Rasputin, the Monk, who’s one of your
chums,

And old Austrian Joe, by the way.
Here! Herod, get up and give Wilhelm your seat—
He has murdered more children than you—
And Pilot, shake hands with Von Hindenburg!
Who has crucified more soldiers too!”

A FISH TALE.

The sloop "Eileen" was a fishing craft,
Rakish forward and good lines aft;
Sailed like a witch and stiff as a tree—
Says Mac, "Now that's the yacht for me!"

He bought her then, and hired Page
To fix her at a decent wage;
Installed an engine, ten horse or so—
Says Mac, "I'll show 'em how to go!"

He beat them all! How good he'd feel
As passing by he'd twirl the wheel!
Then to the guests, with smiling face,
Says Mac, "See boys, the way I race!"

All went smoothly until the day
He raced the ferry boat down the Bay,
She beat him bad—it was a joke—
Says Mac, "I lose! Come, have a smoke!"

He took a crowd on a fishing trip,
Went right outside like any ship,
The sea it rolled, the fog was thick,
Says Mac, "Why Judge, I believe you're sick!"

But best of all was sword fish day,
There were awful works aboard, they say,
When the fish was captured—monstrous thing—
Says Mac, "Boys, I'm a sword fish King!"

BUTTONS.

“Have you read the daily orders, number seven
forty two,
Just been issued by your seniors, 'way up in high
command?

As officers, obey it—lower ratings look to you,
And recognize discipline, that superiors under-
stand—

It is simple, when you know it, cancels every para-
graph

That has been sent, instructions, to you and every
one—

It has caused a lot of worry, really over worked the
staff,

Planning, thinking, of some new way to sew the
buttons on.

“Sub-Lieutenants, they submitted that the proper
thing would be

To straff the bally Skippers, take away their stripe
and rank—

Why the idea was preposterous! have them coming
in from sea,

At the dances with the maidens, on a par with *them*
to swank!

BUTTONS.

So, by each it is requested, and consideration
craved,
From Lieutenants and Commanders to the Captain
now 'tis gone—
He dispatched it to the Admiral, saying, 'Sir! the
cause is saved!
If you will rush this order through, to sew the
buttons on!'

“Stop all business, call together my advisers of
the land!
Never mind the guns for trawlers, they can still put
out to sea,
And patrol the coast without them, they've depth
charges now on hand,
Without pistols and not fitted with the mountings
as should be.
All these things amount to nothing! Really not a
moment's thought
Should be given to such questions! Battles may be
lost or won!
What we all must now consider, how these Skippers
may be taught
To obey the latest orders—made to sew the buttons
on!'

“Come, Canadians, get together! don't be aping
little men,
Those of you that's sailed as Master to the ports of
foreign lands
You're acquainted with the ocean—they the girl's
job with the pen,

BUTTONS.

Over them you rise and tower, tho' they wear a
dozen bands!

There's no doubt that some historian, chronicling
the great event,

Will do justice to the leaders, even tho' they all are
gone—

Raise a tablet with inscription: 'From this spot
the order went,

On the sleeve of every jacket, *Skippers*, put three
buttons on!' "

THE DOCKYARD WAY.

Ho! All you vendors and traders in wares,
You merchants, you brokers and you million-
aires,
Forget all your business, worries and cares,
And listen to what I say!
The story I tell you is vouched for and true,
By responsible people, parties that knew,
In fact, it is something that I have passed thru,
This antique Dockyard way!

Armed with demand books for stores you may need,
Search in a blue book, each sub-head you read,
Is worded the same as a will or a deed,
First on the list will be A;
Fill in all the columns, sheet after sheet,
No matter if pounds, tons, fathoms or feet,
Sign on the back, on the front "To Complete—"
That is the Dockyard way.

To get them approved is the next job in hand;
An hour outside some door you must stand,
Then to be told by some writer so grand,
"The Captain's not in to-day.

THE DOCKYARD WAY.

But see the Commander in room fourty-four,"
From him you must call on twenty-three more,
Ere all are O. K. to present at the store—
The regular Dockyard way.

Next day you must land, with boat and with crew,
And search all the buildings and storehouses
thru,
For some-one in charge, to issue for you
The outfit without delay.
You find that half of it isn't in stock,
And what there is, you must get to the dock
The best way you can—get over the shock—
It's the obsolete Dockyard way!

Ye Gods! What a sight—a crew on the go,
Lugging and rolling, through mud, slush and
snow,
Work that a horse could do easy, you know,
Hitched up in a common dray!
Could Noah come back, and on earth again roam,
If he searched this Planet, from centre to dome,
In the Halifax Dockyard he'd feel most at home—
The antediluvian way!

THE FLU.

- -

At first a chill, a sneeze or two,
And then a cough to bother you.

Home remedies—a pill, a swet,
A mustard poultice makes you fret.

Call a doctor,—you're getting worse,
It's pneumonia,—send a Nurse..

The Parson's next,—life's journey thru—
Crape on the door—thus ends the Flu.

STRANDED.

*As I strolled in the Park, at the close of the day,
To muse and view life in my own humble way,
I encountered a drunkard—these words he did say:*

“Have a drink, stranger! What! You refuse?

My principal weakness is fighting the booze;
Excepting, perhaps, like most sailor men,

We fall for the women now and again;
Of course you people who live on the land,
Never will know us or can understand,

Why, when ashore, we are hitting the pace—

It's a Cabaret girl, with camouflaged face,
A bottle, an auto, a regular spree,

Dead broke in the morning, away then to sea—

That's about what you expect here ashore,

A drunken old sot—just that—nothing more.

Do you ever imagine us when at our best,

Keeping watch forward, or in the crow's nest,
Peering thru darkness, straining our eyes,

In storms, when it's foggy or when the snow flies?
Light on the Starboard, the Port or ahead—

Word to the bridge, whether green, white or red,
Derelict sighted, the sea's running high—

There's men in the rigging—“Save us!” they cry;

STRANDED.

A boat's cleared away—a volunteer crew—

Every man Jack wants to go in her, too!

They pick out the homeless fellows like me;

“Save 'em or perish!” Our code on the sea.

Of course it's not always stormy and wild;

At times the sun shines, and the weather is mild;

The sea is smooth, and the ship ploughs along,

A roll at each bow that breaks wide and strong;

The throb of the engine, the stroke of the bell,

The watch when relieved, with a hearty, “All's
well”

At night when alone, 'neath the stars in the sky,

Repenting, we pray to God up on high;

Not like you church folk, who, on bended knee,

Ask him to care for the sailor at sea—

Confessing our weakness, Him we implore,

To strengthen and care for us while we're
ashore.”

I wonder, when summoned to that Bar up on high,

If God won't forgive all the weak ones that try!

*Friends, if not, there's slim chances for both you
and I!*

SALVOS.

You have heard about the great sea fight, they had
in olden times,

When Nelson won such fame with smooth bore
guns;

The whole of his bombardment would'nt make a
broadside shot,

When Beatty at the Jutland whipped the Huns.
Just imagine both together, then you'll have a fair
idea,

What a racket and commotion there must be,
When a T. R. starts to practise—Action Stations—
sounding forth,

In the sonorous tone of Commander G.

There are armourers, instructors, there's a signal
man or two,

A doctor—just in case there's some-one sick;
Some have tool bags, some suitcases, and you'll
notice, in the rear,

A messenger that's carrying his stick.
When the gun has been inspected, then all hands are
sent below—

To get their meals, or have a smoke and rest;
He orders next a signal made, to the towing ship
near by,

“Veer target, and proceed on course due
West.”

SALVOS.

The man on lookout now reports that he sees a submarine—

Then suddenly Commander G goes daft;
With megaphone up to his lips, he roars the orders
out,

Until there's not a sane man on the craft:
Hoist 'Naught Pennant T Commercial'—Hustle up
with that gun's crew!"

And now he spots the stokers with the hose—
"There's a fire in the Magazine—one in the Dingy
too;"

And forward to the gunstand then he goes.

It is now, "Guns crew, fall in! fall out! change
rounds and as you were!"

At the same time explaining to the Mate,
"See! that shot has fallen over, you must get the
next one down!

Just learn to work the bracket by the rate.
Come along with ammunition—don't you see we're
losing time!

You duffers need not think that this is sport!
It will all come out in orders, from the Captain of
Patrols,

I include everything in my report.

THE MIDDLE WATCH.

The middle watch—from twelve to four—
The time when ghosts come out!
The world's asleep, except for those
On watch, who move about
And see that white and ghostly thing,
The past,—that bye-gone day
Of life,—How spent—Wasted? Improved?
'Tis not for us to say.

The middle watch! The bell strikes one!
Away your thoughts will flee
To childhood days—the ghosts again—
In them you seem to see
Old playmates dear; where are they now—
Alone, somewhere—like you
On watch perhaps—in life or death—
Howe'er the bell goes two.

The middle watch—now three, now four—
At once they seem to ring;
But no—the ghosts of courting days,
When time was on the wing—
As down some shady lane you strolled,
While cupid played his tricks
With both your hearts, and, lover like
You wed—the bell's gone six.

THE MIDDLE WATCH.

The middle watch—'twill soon be o'er,
The shadows will be gone;
Then you come back to life again,
To find yourself alone.
The ghostly hours like life, are spent
And lifted as a weight
From off your heart—and, free again!
The bell has just struck eight.

MAPLES.

“Pray where do you come from, you sleek little
saplings,

And what name are you called, in your forest
home?”

“From hill and from dale, right across the
Dominion,

They all call us Maples—from Sydney to
Nome.”

“Pray where are you going to, all you young
Maples,,

And why all this crating, this care, and this
toil?”

“We are all on our way to France and to Flanders,
To be planted and grow on that foreign soil.”

“But why all these autumn leaves, woven in
crosses?”

“Just tokens to drop in the sea as we go,
For the Nurses, the Doctors, and for the poor
Sailors,

Resting from strife in still waters below.”

“Where will they plant you—in the Park of some
City,

By some prominent road or some lonesome
by-way?”

MAPLES.

“Ah, no! We’ll be planted where crosses are
thickest;
Our roots will seek nurture where Canadians
boys lay.

“The boys that held on, when the battle was
hardest,
With shells and machine guns, with fire and
with gas;
The hordes couldn’t move them—the toll is the
crosses;
We’ll grow on that line where the Hun couldn’t
pass.

“We’ll grow to be giant trees. Season on season,
The birds will inhabit our branches so tall;
In the long summer days, at times when it’s hottest,
Cool shadows we’ll cast o’er the ground like a
pall.

“And then, in the winter, our leaves, like a mantle,
Will cover the mounds. This one favor we
crave,
That some kindly zephyr will catch a leaf falling,
And nestle it close to some unknown boy’s
grave.”

“God speed you, then, Maples! As the years follow
on,
When clothed in your glory with foliage red,
You’ll be seen by the yet unborn generations,
Standing like sentinels guarding the dead!”

WHEN JACK'S ASHORE.

In the Spring when ships are coming,
Business seems to boom along,
In the flourishing town of Sydney—
Worthy subject of this song.
When the ice has drifted Southward,
And the harbour's filled once more
With the various craft at anchor,
When the boys all get ashore—

Up and down on Charlotte Street, out around the
Park,
Crowds travelling back and forth, long before
it's dark,
Wentworth Street, down Townsend, too, 'round the
Esplanade,
You'll find Allied sailor boys every night on
guard.

In the Spring, the same old story,
But instead of cooing doves,
It's the maidens don the plumage
And the sailor boy that loves.
Out for joy-rides, picnics, parties,
On the Harbour in canoe,
They're from every walk and station,
Flirting with the boys in blue.

WHEN JACK'S ASHORE.

Up and down on Charlotte Street, Jimmies and their
Janes,
Watch the graceful dancers swing to Missouri
strains,
In to see a vaudeville act, strolling 'round about,
After church on Sunday night, see the train pull
out.

In the Spring some real old duffers,
With their hair all turning gray,
Others bald as ancient Midas,
Sporty still, and awful gay—
These, of course, are not so fussy,
If their stock's quite up to par,
They will either take the daughter
Or be satisfied with Ma.

Up and down on Charlotte Street, to the movie
show,
Down along the boulevard, pair and pair they
go,
When the band's at Wentworth Park, those are gala
nights,
All the people walk that way, taking in the
sights.

In the Spring—but now 'tis Autumn,
Maple leaves are turning red,
Birds have taken their departure,
Southward on the journey sped.

WHEN JACK'S ASHORE.

For the best of friends there's parting,
And for some 'tis woeful sad,
But you never need apply it
To a flirting sailor lad.

Up and down on Charlotte Street, all alone they go,
Soon will come the Winter winds,—raw with
sleet and snow—
Girls, away with Summer togs, and your love affair,
Jack's now in another Port, with a new girl
there.



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Inness, W. A.
Rhymes of the R.N.C.V.R.

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